

DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife begins treating downstate ponds for nuisance aquatic weeds

DOVER – With inland water temperatures rising and aquatic plants emerging, DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife has begun annual treatment of downstate public-access ponds for nuisance aquatic weeds. These nuisance weeds, if left unchecked, can choke the water, crowding out beneficial plant species, and preventing fishing and boating access. Ponds being treated this year are Abbotts Pond near Milford, Concord Pond near Seaford, and Horsey Pond in Laurel.

Hydrilla, a non-native plant that likely entered the state through the aquarium trade, is the primary target of the treatments. The Division of Fish & Wildlife's Fisheries Section is applying Sonar, an EPA-registered and approved aquatic herbicide containing fluridone, to the ponds where hydrilla is widespread. Sonar has been used in Delaware since the 1980s, and has proven environmentally-compatible and effective for controlling hydrilla. Sonar does not pose any threat to wildlife, including fish, nor are there any restrictions placed on fishing or consumption of fish as a result of these treatments.

Signs are posted in the boat ramp area of each pond on the day of treatment. The only special precaution is a 30-day restriction from the date of treatment on water use from the ponds. Residents and farmers alongside the ponds and those directly downstream should not use pond water to irrigate their gardens, yards, or agricultural lands for 30 days following treatment to avoid possible damage to their plantings.

To prevent the spread of invasive aquatic vegetation to other ponds and waterways, anglers and boaters are encouraged to remove all hydrilla and other aquatic plants from their boats, trailers, and gear before leaving the boat ramp area.

The Division of Fish & Wildlife treats only state-managed ponds with public angler access, since the treatment work is funded through the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program and state fishing license funds. While the Division of Fish & Wildlife does not treat private ponds, it can provide a list of businesses licensed in Delaware to treat nuisance aquatic weeds. For more information on treatment of state-managed ponds, please call the Fisheries Section at 302-739-9914.

Residents also are reminded that in order to use water from Delaware's freshwater ponds, an annual permit from DNREC's Division of Water is required. Residents who have these permits receive individual advance notice of the upcoming pond treatments. For information on obtaining an irrigation permit from the Division of Water, please call Bill Cocke, Water Allocation Section, at 302-739-9945. More information can be found on the DNREC website at [Water Supply](#). For the permit application, scroll down and click the link to "one-page short form application."

Follow the Division of Fish & Wildlife on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/DelawareFishWildlife>.

Contact: Joanna Wilson, DNREC Public Affairs, 302-739-9902

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